CHAPTER VIII.

Field Inspection.

"This should be done from time to time with the relevant records and the village officials at hand, and should be chiefly directed to the Circle Inspector's work, and supervision to see that it has been sufficient and efficient. .... Numerous other opportunities will occur to look over the lands of a village and, whether the inspection be formal or informal, it will enable the Assistant to judge of the energy of his subordinates and put him in the way of gaining invaluable knowledge. Such points as the diversion of farm yard manure to use as fuel owing to the scarcity of wood, the diverse varieties of crops and their meaning, their rotations, their diseases, insect pests, damage done by trespassing cattle, by wild animals and by thieves—all of them affecting the life of the cultivator but hid to the careless observer will come to light when looking over the fields in friendly talk with the owners....."

Crop Inspection.

Crop inspection should be done in the field wherever possible and not only in those fields near the village sites. It is a good plan occasionally to have the Village Officers meet you with V. F. VII & XII (Register of Crops and Tenancies) at the edge of the village lands and to inspect crops on your way from the village boundary to the Gavthan by a circuitous route through the fields. You will probably find several omissions or errors, for the traditional method of making up V. F. XII, crop record, is not for the Kulkarni or Talati to tramp about the fields in the hot sun, but for him to

sit comfortably in the Chavdi with the Patil, and ask him e.g., " what has Manaji grown in the Stony field this year ?—from the books it was bajri last year ". If the Patil does not know, the Village servant will be asked and if he does not provide an answer, Manaji will be sent for, and if he is not home, anyone with the land on that side of the village will be roped in, and the reply, correct or not, entered in V. F. XII. Areas and mixed crops are thus particularly liable to error. The wise Talati however personally examines a few survey numbers near the village where from experience he knows that the Circle Inspector or the Mamlatdar always does check the crops.

Riding a quiet horse and holding the village map, and with the Talati with V. F. XII and some of the villagers alongside, you can check crops, areas, and tenants (though not perhaps terms of leases) on your way without stopping. Riding a horse is essential as otherwise you cannot see over the crops to check the areas by eye.

Boundary mark inspection

Boundary mark inspection cannot be done so quickly, but it is important. No one likes boundary mark repairs—except the contractor who provides the boundary stones—the villager because he has either to repair his boundary marks himself or pay for it to be done, and the Village Officers and Circle Inspectors because the work cannot be done in the village, but must be done in the field in the sun. Therefore excuses are always being made to postpone boundary mark repairs for another year and yet another year. This should be checked. It is easy to keep the Boundary Marks of a survey number in order if they are regularly attended to, but once many are lost, then remeasurement is

needed, and the cost to Government and to the cultivator becomes very heavy. A Boundary Mark repaired in time may save nine.

If Boundary Marks are allowed to disappear, the basis on which the Land Record system is founded goes too—as no one will know which survey number is which, nor who occupies any survey number and the Village Forms will be useless. Of course the need for Boundary repair varies in different villages—it probably is greatest in irrigated tracts, where much levelling and bunding is always being done, and least in dry stony uplands where cairns remain indefinitely. But the Assistant Collector *must* see that the work is not neglected on any excuse. With an eye for a map and some practice, you will find that you can check the correct placing of boundary marks with surprising facility, while crop inspecting or doing other work in the field.

Annewari.

Annewari is the estimate of what proportion a crop bears to a normal crop in that village. The assessment of Land Revenue is based on a normal crop yield, which is taken to be represented by 12 annas. The normal yield is not taken on a basis of 16 annas because, when a villager talks of a 16 anna crop, he has in mind the crop which he gets in *good* years, and forgets the intervening years during which the crops were less. It is obviously not possible to take the best crop as normal, and therefore the 12 annas is taken as representing a normal crop for annewari purposes.

When the yield of the crops in a village falls below half the normal, i.e., 6 annas but is more than $\frac{1}{3}$ or

4 annas, collection of half the current year's consolidated Land Revenue is suspended. When the yield is ⅓ or less i.e., 4 annas or below, no land revenue is collected.

When there is suspended land revenue, if the crops are 11 annas or over, both the current and one year's suspended land revenue is collected, and if the crops are 8 annas but under eleven, the whole of the current and half one year suspended land revenue is collected.

[Land Revenue Rules, Ch. XVI (XXX *seq*).]

In an area or tract where in any year the crops are bad, or there are suspended arrears of land revenue, it is therefore important to get a correct annewari for the protection both of Government revenue against loss and of the cultivator against exaction of more land revenue than he should pay.

The estimate for annewari is founded primarily on the yield in lbs. per acre of various crops in various soils, based originally on tests made at the time of Settlement to ascertain yields and continued by crop experiments conducted by Revenue and Agricultural authorities thereafter.

Of course if a field has had series of crop experiments taken in it for a number of years, it is easy in a year of bad rains to take another crop experiment and see whether the yield is half or one-fourth of the normal, but it is obviously impossible to keep records of every field. It is also impossible in any large area where crops are bad, to take extensive actual tests of the yield per acre, because the period between a crop coming to maturity and its harvest is so short that, if more than a few villages are affected, the annewari must be judged by eye.

The annewari is first estimated by the Circle Inspector with the help of a Committee which includes the Village Officers and on consideration of this, the Mamlatdar decides the annewari. This must be checked and can, if necessary, be revised by the Prant Officer. The calculations by which various areas and different annewaris for different crops are combined into the general annewari of the village are given in Land Revenue Rules, Ch. XVI (XXX *seq.*).

The annewari can only be properly checked by personal inspection, and it is important for an Assistant Collector to be able to make an estimate of the relation of the crop growing in a field to the crop which that field would produce in a normal year. Scientific accuracy in an eye-estimate is clearly impossible, but a good deal can be done by practice. It is a good plan to carry a rough note book and as you inspect the crops to enter in it the anna valuation of each survey number you inspect. If 20 or 30 numbers are inspected, the average anna valuation can be worked out from the notes and this will give you a more accurate result by which to check your general impression. Whenever time and circumstances permit, make a crop experiment on a crop ready for harvesting. Have one guntha from a crop reaped and the ears roughly threshed, weigh the resulting grain and check the result against any figures of normal outturn that can be obtained from Settlement Reports or from the Agricultural Department. Similar experiments can of course be made with other than grain crops, e.g., by picking a guntha of cotton. Before reaping the crop for an experiment, make a mental estimate of the number of pounds it

is likely it will yield, ask the Mamlatdar, the Circle Inspector, the owner and the Villagers for their estimates, and later compare all these with the actual result.

Much can be learnt from questioning the cultivators. Obviously they will not estimate the yield of a crop in lbs. per acre, but many will be able to give with surprising accuracy the number of local maunds which a crop standing in a particular survey number will yield this year, and how many that survey number will yield in a normal year. But remember that the villager's estimate of normal is a 16 anna crop, and not the 12 anna crop on which annewari is based, and also that the maund in some parts varies almost from village to village, and so it is necessary to find out in each case how many pounds there are in their maund. If there is any doubt as to the amount of Revenue to be collected, it is well to ask the villagers to take you to the part of the village where the crops are worst. This will prevent the common argument that the inspecting officer only saw the best fields.

Again the assessment per acre of a survey number will give an indication of the quality of the soil, and so of the normal crop that may be expected therein. What may look at first sight a miserable crop may in reality be the normal crop of poor soil. Therefore when checking the annewari, whenever possible look up the assessment of the survey number, and learn to estimate the probable assessment per acre of the various kinds of soil you see. It is then possible, when riding quickly through the fields of a village to make an estimate of the annewari as you go.

This practice is useful when it is necessary to cover a large number of villages at a short space of time, in order to check an annewari which, e.g., by being 6 annas or 7 annas will involve a decision whether Land Revenue is to be collected or not.

It is difficult to frame an adequate judgment of the crops by motoring through a village, partly because one travels too fast, and partly because roads passable for cars often pass mainly through the good level land of the village and avoid the stony or uneven uplands.

When the season is such that the crops in bad lands are worst and need to be seen, it is often useful to ride along the boundary between two villages, for normally the farther a field is from the village site the worse its soil is. On horseback one can traverse the fields themselves, not merely the roads, and diverge at will to see areas which look to be above or below the average.

It must be remembered that in estimating the annewari the normal 12 anna crop is based on that in land averagely well cultivated, and it is not fair to judge the annewari of a village by the crops of the best and richest cultivators nor by those of the poorest and the laziest.

If one Taluka or more of the Assistant Collector's charge show an annewari which needs checking, it is probably not possible, even with two or three horses, to visit nearly all the villages in the short space of time between the maturity and the harvesting of the crops. It is therefore desirable to know any idiosyncrasies of the Mamlatdars, Mahalkaris and

Circle Inspectors in estimating annewaris. If on test of four or five villages, you find that your estimate of the annewari is consistently higher than the Mamlatdar's, it is probably safe to put up his estimate for those villages which you have no time to visit. Per contra, some officials seem to have an idea that Government prefers a high annewari, or perhaps they wish to save the trouble of calculating the suspensions that may be due if the annewari is 6 annas or below and this biases their judgment. Therefore if you find that your estimate of the annewari is constantly below that of the Mamlatdar or Circle Inspector, you are fairly safe in reducing his estimate in other villages.

In these days when improvement of the land revenue system is a matter of discussion, it is particularly necessary that the annewari should be carefully checked, and therefore the Assistant Collector should take every opportunity of practising his estimates of crops and of testing these estimates both against the actual yield and against the opinion of experienced subordinates, agricultural officers, intelligent cultivators, etc.